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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0533**

HENRY A. WAXMAN  
33RD DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

May 23, 2013

The Honorable Eric K. Shinseki  
Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20420-0002

Dear Secretary Shinseki:

I am writing to urge the Department to move expeditiously on the Los Angeles National Cemetery columbarium. I wrote to you on October 24, 2012 inquiring about the columbarium and also raised this matter on March 15, 2013 in a meeting with Under Secretary of Health, Dr. Robert Petzel, and Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs, Dr. Tommy Sowers.

There is a tremendous need for a columbarium at the Los Angeles National Cemetery. Los Angeles County is home to more than 300,000 veterans, which is the largest number of any county in the nation. The Los Angeles National Cemetery has been closed to burials since 1978 and the nearest national cemetery is in Riverside, California, more than 75 miles away. Since the closure of the National Cemetery, my office has been contacted by numerous family members wishing to have their lost loved ones interred in a proper National Cemetery in Los Angeles.

The VA recognized the need for a columbarium a number of years ago, and in 2007 Secretary Nicholson approved a plan to construct a columbarium. The plan called for a simple intra-agency transfer of about 13 acres from the West LA VA to the Los Angeles National Cemetery, which abuts the West LA VA campus. Although it has been six years since the plan was approved, the VA has yet to make the intra-agency land transfer or begin construction.

I have worked on behalf of elderly veterans since 2001 to urge the Department of Veterans Affairs to construct a columbarium. It is difficult to understand why the VA has not made progress on a project that is clearly needed, has no opposition, and is supported by elderly veterans and their families. I would appreciate receiving information about the timeline for the completion of the columbarium, including the project's scope, whether it will be completed in phases, the number of niches the columbarium will contain, and when you expect families will be able to inter their loved ones there.

I hope the VA will move expeditiously on this important project, and I would appreciate receiving an update on the project by June 15, 2013.

Sincerely,



HENRY A. WAXMAN  
Member of Congress